



REPORT

ON THE

HEALTH OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH OF WEST BROMWICH,

FOR THE YEAR 1908, BY

HERBERT MANLEY, M.A., M.D., D.P.H.,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW,

Medical Officer of Health to the Borough,

TO WHICH ARE APPENDED THE REPORTS OF THE SANITARY
INSPECTOR, FOOD AND DRUGS INSPECTOR, AND PUBLIC
ANALYST.

WEST BROMWICH:

PRINTED BY JOSEPH BATES, CAXTON WORKS, 12 AND 14, PARADISE STREET.

MUNICIPAL BOROUGH OF WEST BROMWICH.

Population, 1901 Census	...	...	...	65,170
Estimated Population, 1908	...	...	...	70,000
Area	...	...	...	5,860 acres.

Height of West Bromwich—

Highest Level is	...	...	...	573-ft.
Lowest Level is	...	...	...	347-ft.

Rateable Value of Property assessed to the

Relief of the Poor, November, 1908	...	£230,817 10 0
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Rateable Value of Property assessed to the

General District Rate, November, 1908	£211,637 18 9
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Number of Houses in the Borough,

November, 1908	...	14,924
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TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
SANITARY COMMITTEE OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH
OF WEST BROMWICH.

GENTLEMEN,—

Herewith I beg to present my Nineteenth Annual Report on the health of the Borough and the work done by the Sanitary Department during the past twelve months. I have to thank the Committee and all the members of the Town Council for the continued confidence they have shown in me in assenting unanimously to the suggestion that I should undertake the duties of Medical Examiner of Schools and devote the whole of my time to my official duties.

Introductory

Since March last I have abandoned the private practice of my profession, and given my services entirely to municipal work. The duties of my office as Medical Officer of Health are not incompatible with the efficient character of my inspection of school children, and I am glad to feel that in our town at least perfect harmony prevails between the two departments which I serve.

The report which follows deals with the conclusion of the Scarlet Fever epidemic which commenced in 1907, and which continues to affect several of the districts which march with us. Apart from this, the year has been comparatively free from the incidence of epidemic disease. It is also pleasant to be able to point out that the ratio of infant mortality is the lowest on record. It must not be supposed that this improvement is due to the steps which have been taken in the appointment of a Health Visitor, as it will not be possible to estimate the true value of her work for some years; but we may hope that a brighter future is dawning in this respect.

Scarlet Fever
Epidemic

The responsibilities of the Sanitary Department continue to increase. This year we have undertaken the work of two new underground conveniences, and we are about to erect a refuse destructor. At the close of the year we are confronted with a new series of regulations for the notification of tuberculosis, and it is probable that the report of the Poor-Law Commission, which is expected very shortly, will seriously increase the

Sanitary
Department

Sanitary
Department

work of the Committee, if it is true that the administration of medical relief is to be placed under the supervision of the Health Committees instead of, as at present, under a separate Authority.

Medical
Examination
of School
Children

The Local Government Board require that with this report shall be included a report on the Medical Examination of School Children, as far as it affects the Medical Officer of Health. This has been dealt with in a special report addressed to the Education Committee, copies of which will be sent with this report to the authorities.

In conclusion, permit me to thank the Committee and my brother officers for much kindness and co-operation, and to assure you of my devotion to the best interests of my native Borough.

Yours faithfully,

HERBERT MANLEY,

M.A., M.D., D.P.H., ETC., ETC.

January 20th, 1909.

REPORT.

The Borough of West Bromwich now contains in round numbers 70,000 inhabitants, dispersed over 5,860 acres, and occupying about 15,000 houses. Its height above sea level varies from 573-ft. to 347-ft., and it is bounded for the greater part of its northern side, extending round to the east, by the natural boundary of the River Tame, which divides it from Tipton, Wednesbury, Walsall, and Perry Barr, while there is practically no defined boundary separating it from Oldbury and Handsworth.

Population,
Acreage, etc.

As a County Borough it enjoys a full measure of self-government, the police alone being under the control of the administrative County of Stafford. It also provides for its own sewage, its own electric lighting, its own gas, and possesses a full hospital equipment for both Smallpox and Fever on separate areas.

Self-
government

During the past year the question of Black Country federation has been mooted, and some have thought it possible that the example of the Potteries might be followed with advantage. There can be no doubt that any such proposition would receive the most careful attention of the President of the Local Government Board and his advisers, but the only advantageous combination seems scarcely possible.

Black
Country
Federation

The union of Smethwick, Handsworth, Perry Barr, and West Bromwich into one huge municipality would provide a County Borough of nearly 200,000 inhabitants, well provided with all necessary municipal equipment. Of course the difficulties of adjustment and the proper valuation of buildings, etc., would be very great, but if it so seemed good the thing could be done. In the alternative, it seems not unlikely that one of two things must follow; the incorporation of Handsworth or its absorption by the City of Birmingham, in which case we might with advantage endeavour to secure a small portion to round off our own boundary.

West Bromwich is also the centre of a Poor-Law Union and contains a Workhouse with Infirmary and Poor-Law Schools. It is divided into two registration districts, which are separated by the purely artificial boundary of the high road from Bir-

Poor-Law
Union

Poor-Law
Union

mingham to Dudley, and which do not of necessity present much contrast in their physical and residential characters. It is divided for municipal purposes into six wards, but here again the distribution is of an arbitrary and artificial nature, and does not adapt itself to statistical classification and distinction. The statistics of the Borough are therefore presented as a whole, and where it has been necessary to comment upon the characteristics of particular areas, they have been mapped out according to the nature of the houses or from other physical reasons.

Trade
Depression

As I have already had occasion to notice in my reports upon the school children of the Borough, much difference has been caused from time to time by the occurrence of trade depression, the closing of works, and the consequent lack of regular employment in some parts of the Borough; but the areas so affected have not coincided with defined areas of known population, and an estimate more or less accurate has had to be formed of the extent of this factor in the production of disease or mortality.

Estimated
Population

The population was estimated by the Registrar-General for the year 1908 at 69,790, and is probably rather below than above that figure, as we are at a maximum distance from census returns, which alone can be considered accurate.

There are upon the registers of the Public Elementary Schools no less than 13,000 children, in addition to those who are educated privately and at home; there are also educational facilities for Secondary Education, Art, and Science.

Institutions

Among the institutions in which deaths are recorded, it is well to remember that we have a Union Workhouse, with its Infirmary, the average population of which is not less than 1,000, and in which a large proportion of the deaths are those of persons admitted from outside the Borough; also a District Hospital, to which patients are admitted from Wednesbury and Oldbury, as well as from West Bromwich.

Births

The statistical returns of the past year cannot be considered unfavourable when compared with other years. The birth-rate, which has been steadily declining for the last twenty years, has made a momentary pause in its downward stage; 2,268 births have been registered during the year, of which 56

are returned as illegitimate. The birth-rate amounts to 32.5 per 1,000, which, though 1.1 below the decennial average, is higher than that of the three years immediately preceding. In this connection a brief reference may be made to the working of the new Notification of Births Act, which was adopted at the commencement of the year, and which can hardly be called a success from all points of view. Its detailed working will be noticed in its proper place, but it may suffice here to say that about 50 per cent. of the known births have been notified.

Births

The total number of deaths registered in the 53 weeks ending Jan. 2nd, 1909, as having occurred within the Borough and in its Public Institutions, amounted to 1,259, of which 312 occurred in institutions. Thus the Workhouse reported no less than 232, of which 103 were from outside; the District Hospital 53, of which 27 were from outside; and the Isolation Hospital 23, of which three were natives of Handsworth; there were in addition four deaths in the school for defective children at Sandwell Hall. Notice was received from the Medical Officer to the City of Birmingham of nine deaths occurring in the General Hospitals and in a private Hospital in the city, and these have been included in our returns. Three West Bromwich miners perished in the Hamstead Colliery Disaster, but these are to be found in the statistics of Perry Barr and not in those of our own Borough.

Deaths

The net return of deaths to be debited to West Bromwich is thus 1,131, which, with a population of 69,700, gives a death-rate of 16.0 per 1,000. This may be regarded as a very satisfactory return, and although not the lowest on record, it is considerably below the average of the preceding ten years.

The deaths from the principal Zymotic Diseases are as follows:—Measles, 1; Scarlet Fever, 26; Whooping Cough, 27; Diphtheria and Membranous Croup, 22; Enteric Fever, 3; Puerperal Fever, 1; and Diarrhœa, 43; giving a total of 123, or a zymotic death-rate of 1.8 per 1,000, the decennial average being 2.6 per 1,000. A full account of these deaths will be found under the heading of Infectious Diseases.

Deaths from
Zymotic
Disease

Three hundred and nineteen children died in the first year of their life, averaging only 140 per 1,000 children born, and giving by far the best result yet attained in this Borough. Reference to the subjoined table shows that 92 of these chil-

Infantile
Mortality

Infantile Mortality

dren died under one month of their age, of whom 52 did not get a fair start in life. Of these 45 were brought into the world before their time, four had irremediable defects at birth, and three were injured in the birth.

Of the total of 319 no less than 64 come under these heads and must be considered to be an almost irreducible minimum. The causes of this series of misfortunes are very hard to trace, for a careful enquiry has shown that there is little or no amount of female labour employed here which would give rise to unfavourable pre-natal conditions. Lung diseases are responsible for 79 cases, and it cannot be denied that Bronchitis and Pneumonia are among the most serious factors in lowering the physique of our elementary school children. Among the 2,050 parents who have been interviewed in the course of examination of school children, a very large percentage report that the child has had Inflammation of the Lungs (presumably Broncho-pneumonia) at least once, while a very considerable number are said to have had it twice. The incidence of Zymotic Disease among the infants has been small this year, the really serious item being Diarrhoea and its fellow included under the same heading, Infective Enteritis. The ordinary cases of Enteritis are separately classified.

The various forms of tubercle in children have claimed 22 victims, which is not beyond the average. Convulsions is returned as the cause of 25 deaths, some of which were the subject of enquiry by the Coroner and which remain a somewhat obscure heading, badly needing a more scientific and accurate classification.

Three infants were the victims of the habit of taking the baby to bed with the parents, and it is much to be hoped that the vigorous action of the State, followed up by the drastic action of His Majesty's Coroner, will still further reduce this quite unnecessary item of mortality.

Inquests

The Borough Coroner has held 97 Inquests during the year, of which 71 were upon the bodies of those who belonged to West Bromwich, and 26 were from outside, who either died in our institutions or came into the Borough for the purpose of committing suicide. There were two children murdered at

Hill Top and the three cases of overlaying noticed above; one child was found dead in a passage and an open verdict was returned; there were twelve undoubted cases of suicide, and five others in which in the absence of definite evidence an open verdict was given. Forty-nine cases were due to accidental violence, and the remainder are returned as natural causes. In addition to these cases in which enquiry was held with a jury, twenty cases were referred to the Coroner and passed by him, after due enquiry, to be entered as "uncertified."

Inquests

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Five hundred and seventy-six notifications of cases of Infectious Disease were received during the year, as follows:—Scarlet Fever, 442; Enteric or Typhoid Fever, 9; Diphtheria (including Membranous Croup), 62; Puerperal Fever, 4; and Erysipelas, 59.

Notifications

The epidemic of Scarlet Fever predicted for 1907 ran its course, as shown in the report for that year, in which we had 770 cases; the neighbouring town of Smethwick, who began a little later than West Bromwich, had 431 cases; and Handsworth, in which there was no epidemic, 217 cases. In the year now closing the course of events has followed the usual lines: our notifications have gradually dropped at the end of the year, giving a considerable total, but still showing the decline of the epidemic curve, and represented by 442 cases; Smethwick following on our heels has attained the maximum intensity, with a total of just over 600 cases; while Handsworth, at the conclusion of the year, is still in the middle of the curve, and shows a total of upwards of 480 cases. At the same time, the disease is making progress in Wednesbury and Walsall, neither of which Boroughs attempt to isolate Scarlet Fever as a systematic precaution.

Scarlet Fever

Of the 442 cases in West Bromwich 349 were removed to Hospital, being just 80 per cent. We received 97 cases from Handsworth, out of 480, and one case from Perry Barr, in which three other cases were reported. So far, therefore, our experience of the two years is that we have had 1,212 cases, Smethwick has had 1,031 cases, and Handsworth, up to the end of the year, has apparently had only 697 cases. It is

Scarlet Fever quite evident that there is a distinct periodic law in the curve of Scarlet Fever, although modifying factors may at any moment be introduced.

There were nineteen deaths among 349 cases removed to Hospital from our own people, of which two died of tuberculosis and two of acute inflammation of the lungs, wholly independent of the disease for which they were admitted; the remainder, fifteen in number, died of the various complications of Scarlet Fever. The death-rate per 1,000 for the whole of the cases for Scarlet Fever admitted during the year was only four, which is well below the average.

Infectious Hospital

The management of the Hospital during the year has remained in the same hands, the Matron (Miss Davies) and her two chief Nurses (Nurse Taylor and Nurse Wilson) being still in office. Upon the re-appointment of the Medical Officer of Health to the Hospital, permission was given to him to delegate the Hospital work during his holiday and in case of severe pressure, and for some weeks the work was undertaken by Dr. Clement Belcher, D.P.H., of Birmingham, and during the temporary illness of the Medical Officer by Mr. Woolsey Stocks, of the Queen's Hospital, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.; in both cases the work was efficiently done and no hitch occurred.

A detailed account of the cases notified and the numbers admitted in each week of the year is given, and a comparative statement showing the fluctuations in Scarlet Fever epidemics.

Smallpox Hospital

The Smallpox Hospital at Friar Park has been regularly visited by the Medical Officer and the Matron during the year, and is in good repair. It will probably require a few trifling repairs in the coming year, but so long as it is not needed it must be regarded as a species of insurance; the up-keep is extremely small at present, and the whole of the loan has not yet been expended.

Christmas Tree

The usual Christmas Tree for the children was held, and gifts were received from the Chairman, the Medical Officer, Mrs. Manley, and several ladies, and some of the parents of the children. Messrs. Mason, Williams and Co. kindly sent a case of oranges.

Week ending			Notifi- cations.	Admis- sions.	Week ending			Notifi- cations.	Admis- sions.	Notifications and Admissions
Jan.	4	...	8	6	July	9	...	6	6	
	,,	11	...	17	12	,,	16	...	6	5
	,,	18	...	21	17	,,	23	...	5	5
	,,	25	...	19	16	,,	30	...	4	3
Feb.	1	...	14	8	Aug.	8	...	9	5	
	,,	8	...	16	11	,,	15	...	9	7
	,,	15	...	10	6	,,	22	...	8	5
	,,	22	...	14	7	,,	29	...	4	3
	,,	29	...	14	11	Sept.	5	...	3	2
Mar.	7	...	17	15	,,	12	...	6	6	
	,,	14	...	7	7	,,	19	...	10	7
	,,	21	...	4	4	,,	26	...	8	7
	,,	28	...	16	14	Oct.	3	...	10	9
April	4	...	5	4	,,	10	...	7	7	
	,,	11	...	12	9	,,	17	...	6	4
	,,	18	...	7	7	,,	24	...	7	7
	,,	25	...	11	11	,,	31	...	11	7
May	2	...	10	9	Nov.	7	...	6	5	
	,,	9	...	5	1	,,	14	...	3	3
	,,	16	...	8	8	,,	21	...	9	4
	,,	23	...	7	6	,,	28	...	3	3
	,,	30	...	7	7	Dec.	5	...	5	4
June	6	...	6	6	,,	12	...	8	8	
	,,	13	...	5	4	,,	19	...	10	5
	,,	20	...	9	7	,,	26	...	5	3
	,,	27	...	4	2	1909.				
July	3	...	4	4	Jan.	2	...	7	—	

SCARLET FEVER RECORDS.

Year.		Notifications.	Admissions.	Deaths.
1890	...	378	196	15
1891	...	208	121	9
1892	...	55	42	4
1893	...	262	113	15
1894	...	83	48	4
1895	...	155	124	18
1896	...	320	212	32
1897	...	346	218	21
1898	...	352	257	9
1899	...	213	153	8

Notifications and Admissions	Year.		Notifications.	Admissions.	Deaths.
	1900	...	182	171	5
	1901	...	120	98	4
	1902	...	1046	370	64
	1903	...	320	142	24
	1904	...	128	86	10
	1905	...	174	118	11
	1906	...	162	147	5
	1907	...	773	419	29
	1908	...	442	349	26

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF SCARLET FEVER.

Under 1	...	...	5	9—10	...	...	33
1—2	...	...	9	10—11	...	...	20
2—3	...	...	28	11—12	...	...	22
3—4	...	...	37	12—13	...	...	11
4—5	...	...	48	13—14	...	...	8
5—6	...	...	52	14—15	...	...	8
6—7	...	...	57	15—25	...	...	21
7—8	...	...	31	Over 25	...	...	6
8—9	...	...	46				

Enteric
Fever

The nine cases of Enteric Fever included five males and four females, and were of very slight import; one occurred in the Union Workhouse, and two cases were very doubtful in character. One case was removed to Hospital and proved fatal from perforation and hæmorrhage, and two other cases also died. It is to be hoped that in future there will be less and less of this disease among us.

Diphtheria
and Croup

The occurrence of 62 cases of Diphtheria and Membranous Croup is from any aspect a most serious fact, and it would be of much greater importance if it were probable that every case so reported was really what it professed to be. Without attaching undue importance to the results of bacteriological investigation, it is very disappointing to find that so little use is made of the facilities offered to medical men for having their cases tested in the laboratory of the University of Birmingham. Seven cases only were referred to Birmingham, and of these only one showed the typical bacillus. The districts which attracted most attention were Bilhay Street and Whitehall Road. In the former some very grave drainage defects were

discovered, and the latter has been during the year the focus of a series of quasi-zymotic complaints of sore throat and follicular tonsillitis, which have appeared to co-exist with the troubles which have taken place in connection with the sewerage of the district and the fouling of the boundary brook. It will be remembered that this brook has long been a matter of anxiety to the Medical Officer, and that it is now proposed once more to undertake a joint cleansing of its bed by Tipton and West Bromwich. The lesson to be learned chiefly from our investigations into the cases of Diphtheria is that now that the town has almost completed its conversion from a midden to a water-carriage town the necessity for a most rigorous inspection of all new drains and the application of smoke tests is very plain.

The time has now come when the Isolation Hospital may with advantage be utilised for selected cases of Diphtheria. One case especially during the past year deserves notice, in which a local medical man undertook and successfully carried through a case of Diphtheria and Tracheotomy in a private house, with the assistance of the nurses of the District Nursing Home. It was not intended that even with such pecuniary assistance as was given in this case by the Committee, the nurses of the Akrell Home should attend infectious cases of this character, and your Committee has now given permission for cases of Diphtheria to be treated in the Hospital as accommodation permits efficient isolation.

The cases of Diphtheria are thus classified:—

Age.	1st quarter.	2nd quarter.	3rd quarter.	4th quarter.	Total.
Under five	... 7	6	2	5	20
5—15	... 6	10	7	7	30
15—25	... 1	1	3	2	7
Over 25	... —	3	—	2	2
	—	—	—	—	—
	14	20	12	16	62

Of these cases 24 occurred in the Greets Green district, and all except one in the practice of one medical man. No cases were reported in the practice of the Poor-Law District Medical Officers, either in Greets Green or elsewhere in the Borough.

Childbed Fever

Four cases were reported of Childbed Fever, and were referred to the Health Visitor for investigation. One proved fatal, but no definite history of neglect or infection could be found. One was a very doubtful case, the symptoms in which disappeared in a day or two, and one was found to be due to some curious proceedings on the part of a nurse, and recovered very rapidly on being properly examined and the cause removed on the attendance of a second medical man. In this case the midwife appears to have left the case after having undertaken it, and I addressed a caution to her. At the same time the doctor whom she had called in handed the case over to the Poor-Law Medical Officer, and it thus came into our hands. The fourth case was removed to the Workhouse Infirmary, and was discharged quite cured in the care of her husband.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Tuberculosis

The problem of the prevention of Tuberculosis, especially in its best known form of Consumption of the Lungs, still remains to be solved, and a step towards its solution has been taken in the closing days of 1908 by the Chief Medical Officer of the Local Government Board.

Pulmonary Phthisis

On and after the 1st of January, 1909, or as soon as the necessary printing and working out of administrative details can be completed, all cases of Pulmonary Phthisis occurring either in institutions under the Poor-Law or in the practice of Poor-Law District Medical Officers, will be notified to the Medical Officer of Health of the district in which they reside, and their change of address also noticed in the same manner. As it is expressly stated that no interference will be permitted with the perfect freedom of the consumptive to render himself a source of danger to his neighbours, it is a little difficult at present to know what good purpose this is to serve. The issue of a further memorandum is promised shortly.

The treatment of Pulmonary Consumptives of the working classes in expensive sanatoria is rapidly becoming more widely popular, and the example set by the King at Midhurst is likely to create many similar institutions; among these may be classed the new Consumptive Hospital of the City of Birmingham in course of erection upon the Cotswold Hills, at a cost of upwards of £17,000, and the Hospital supported by the County Council of Worcestershire.

When the Council of this Borough are prepared to undertake a scheme involving capital expenditure for the prevention of Tuberculosis, it will perhaps be worth while to consider whether such a scheme should be preventive rather than curative in character.

Pulmonary
Phthisis

By this I mean that until some legislation is adopted for the purpose of ensuring a pure milk supply, little else will be of any use, and for this we must look to Parliament.

The milk supply of this town, with a very few exceptions, arrives by rail per the Great Western Railway; there every morning about eleven o'clock the cans which contain the milk are opened, and the milk mixed, sieved and decanted from can to can by men and boys who plunge their dirty coatsleeves into the depths of the can, and who usually have a pipe or a cigarette in their mouths; if the sieving is not done here, it is done in the course of the round opposite the house of the unlucky purchaser, who is very slow to drink the fluid thus supplied to him. It is not wonderful that milk in this town usually shows a considerable sediment of dirt in the milk jug when it has stood for a short time.

Milk Supply

I trust that in the near future some steps may be taken for the more efficient control of the milk supply or for the establishment of municipal milk depôts. That it would be profitable in a short time I have no doubt, and I cannot see that its provision is more revolutionary than that of gas or electricity, which are of small moment in the production or saving of infantile mortality.

THE WORK OF THE HEALTH VISITOR.

Miss Staples, A.R.San.Inst., reports as follows:—

“ The most important part of my work during the past year has been in connection with the adoption of the Notification of Births Act, 1907, which came into full operation in West Bromwich about March 1st. All the notifications received were handed to me, and I have made investigation into the circumstances of the large majority of the cases.

Notification
of Births Act,
1907

“ During the first two months the area selected for thorough enquiry was Greet's Green Ward, but later my investigations were extended to Spon Lane, Hill Top, and the

Notification
of Births Act,
1907

Lyng, and in fact to the Borough generally. Care has been taken to avoid visits being paid unnecessarily to those cases in which a qualified medical man has been present at the birth, and the chief work has been in connection with midwives' cases. In this way the Act has been of double service, since it has been possible to make a systematic enquiry into the work done by the midwives.

“ Upwards of six hundred first visits have been paid to cases, and in most instances, as will be seen from the appended table, the infants are at first breast-fed, but most mothers find it very convenient and more easy to supplement the breast feeding by artificial foods. In these cases numerous re-visits have been made and the mothers advised as to the best form of food and the proper way of giving it.

“ All the cases have been English parents, and in the large majority of cases the mothers have been able to devote themselves to their domestic duties. The amount of female labour among mothers in West Bromwich is very small indeed, and in the 28 cases which came under notice the nature of the occupation was of a very light character.

Midwives

“ The whole of the midwives on the register have been regularly visited and inspected. There are on the register 38 certified women, of whom only five are trained midwives. One hundred and thirty visits have been paid to these women, and I am pleased to report great improvement. One of the oldest and, despite her age, most capable midwives, Mrs. Poulton, died during the year. Four cases of Puerperal Fever were referred to me by the Medical Officer, of whom one died; in each case a careful enquiry was instituted into the history of the case.

Schools
Visited

“ Prior to the commencement of the inspection of school children by the Medical Officer of Health, I visited the following schools:—Moor Street, Lyng, Greet's Green, Lodge Estate, Spon Lane, Black Lake, Beeches Road, Christ Church, S. Peter's, and S. James'. A number of children were seen at home, as a result of these visits, and the mothers cautioned as to neglect and verminous conditions. In this work the co-operation of Miss Barlow, the Superintendent of the District Nurses, has been most valuable.

“ In the early part of the year, during the outbreak of Whooping Cough, Chickenpox, and Measles, in the Lyng district, I visited 51 homes and gave such advice and assistance to the parents as I was able. In March and April the Spon Lane Schools were attacked by a severe outbreak of Mumps and Measles, in connection with which I visited 92 homes.

Whooping
Cough, etc.

“ Acting under the direction of the Medical Officer of Health, I have made a house-to-house investigation of two groups of houses, the one in Swan Village, the other in Mayers Green, including 90 houses. A report upon these houses has already been presented to the Medical Officer.

House-to-
house
investigation

“ In addition to the above work, there have been a large number of visits paid and observations made which do not lend themselves to classification, as in some cases it is necessary to keep a family under notice for many consecutive weeks to ensure the carrying out of the directions given.

“ Out of the 600 cases investigated, 572 mothers were engaged solely in domestic work, and of the remaining 28, 12 children were illegitimate; 509 were breast-fed, 43 were bottle-fed, 41 died at or soon after birth, and seven were not classified in these respects being too ill at the time of visiting.”

In commenting upon this report, I wish to state that while not only is Miss Staples doing excellent work as regards the Notification of Births Act, but that we are getting very considerable help from the staff of the Akrill Nursing Home, to the funds of which the Corporation contribute annually. It cannot be denied that there is still ample room for more women workers in this field, and if we are unable to support a second Health Visitor or School Nurse, I should like to appeal for the formation of a Social Service Guild, wholly unsectarian and non-political; such is contemplated in some of the South Staffordshire towns at the present time.

Akrill
Nursing
Home

THE GENERAL WORK OF THE SANITARY DEPARTMENT.

The statistical details relating to the routine work of the office will be found set out in full in the report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector which accompanies this report. From this it will be seen that the process of altering the character of

Refuse
Removal

Refuse
Removal

the refuse removal of the Borough goes on with undiminished success and progress. The systematic replacement of the old privy midden by the modern system of water-carriage is so far advanced that it is now rare to find any serious opposition to the requirements of the Inspector, and as in the coming year the Committee hope at last to see the erection of a proper refuse destructor, it is also to be hoped that the nuisance of refuse tips, which must always press hardly upon some adjacent householder, will disappear.

No special work has been undertaken during the year, and the routine inspection of the Borough has proceeded as fast as the epidemic of Scarlet Fever would permit.

TABLE I.—VITAL STATISTICS OF WHOLE DISTRICT DURING 1908 AND PREVIOUS YEARS.

Year.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	Births.		Total Deaths Registered in the District.					Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Non- residents registered in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.	Nett Deaths at all ages belonging to the District.	
		Number.	Rate.	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.						Number	Rate.
				Number	Rate per 1000 Births registered	Number	Rate.						
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	
1898	63490	2269	35.7	415	182	1360	21.4	239	112	Not recorded.	1148	18.0	
1899	64060	2364	36.8	425	179	1307	20.4	207	99		1203	18.8	
1900	64630	2242	34.2	439	191	1453	22.4	256	106		1347	20.8	
1901	65200	2229	34.0	363	163	1211	18.5	205	88		1123	17.2	
1902	65910	2287	34.6	372	162	1433	21.7	255	126	Not recorded.	1307	19.3	
1903	66560	2193	33.9	376	164	1199	18.1	223	106		1093	16.3	
1904	67190	2254	33.5	337	149	1172	17.4	239	103		1076	15.9	
1905	67820	2137	31.5	321	150	1255	18.5	280	127		1134	16.7	
1906	68470	2171	31.6	347	159	1205	17.5	272	142	12	1075	15.6	
1907	69120	2052	29.9	312	151	1271	18.4	303	139	4	1136	16.4	
Averages for years 1898-1907		2220	33.6	371	165	1287	19.5	248	115		1164	17.5	
1908	69700	2268	32.5	319	140	1259	18.0	312	137	10	1132	16.0	

TABLE II.

I.	II.
Institutions within the District receiving Sick and Infirm Persons from outside the District.	Institutions outside the District receiving Sick and Infirm Persons from the District.
Union Workhouse	Children's Hospital, Birmingham
District Hospital	General Hospital, Birmingham
Poor-Law Schools	Queen's Hospital, Birmingham
Isolation Hospital	Private Hospitals, Birmingham
Sandwell Hall	Workhouse, Walsall
Smallpox Hospital	

TABLE III.

CASES OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFIED DURING
THE YEAR 1908.

Notifiable Disease.					Cases notified in whole District, at all Ages.	Total Cases removed to Hospital.
Smallpox	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Cholera	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Diphtheria (including Membranous Croup)					62	Nil
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	59	Nil
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	442	349
Typhus Fever	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Enteric Fever	...	...	...	...	9	Nil
Relapsing Fever	...	...	...	...	Nil	2
Continued Fever	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Puerperal Fever	...	...	...	...	4	Nil
Plague	...	...	...	...	Nil	Nil
Total					576	351

TABLE IV.

CAUSES OF, AND AGES AT, DEATH DURING YEAR 1908.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	Deaths at the subjoined Ages of "Residents" whether occurring in or beyond the District.							Total Deaths whether of "Residents" or "Non-residents" in Public Institutions in the District.
	All Ages	Under 1 year	1 and under 5	5 and under 15	15 and under 25	25 and under 65	65 and upwards.	
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
Measles	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...
Scarlet Fever	26	1	17	8	...	...	...	16
Whooping Cough	27	15	12	...	...	...	...	...
Diphtheria (including Membranous Croup)	22	...	10	12	...	...	...	...
Enteric Fever	3	...	...	2	...	1	...	1
Epidemic Influenza	13	...	...	...	...	6	7	2
Diarrhœa	43	32	10	...	...	1	...	...
Enteritis	20	11	6	1	...	...	2	1
Puerperal Fever	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...
Erysipelas	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	1
Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis)	57	3	2	4	6	40	2	22
Other Tuberculous Diseases	50	20	19	5	2	4	...	7
Cancer, Malignant Disease	51	...	...	...	...	32	19	14
Bronchitis	158	57	22	3	...	23	53	23
Pneumonia	87	22	28	6	2	22	7	7
Pleurisy	2	...	...	...	...	1	1	...
Other Diseases of Respiratory Organs	2	...	...	...	1	1	...	2
Alcoholism—Cirrhosis of Liver	10	...	...	...	...	10	...	...
Venereal Diseases	2	2	...	...	...	...	...	...
Premature Birth	50	50	...	...	...	...	...	...
Diseases and Accidents of Parturition	2	...	...	...	...	2	...	...
Heart Diseases	64	1	...	2	10	38	13	23
Accidents	39	3	9	6	3	15	3	42
Suicides	11	...	...	1	...	7	3	...
All Other Causes	389	100	22	7	5	78	177	151
All Causes	1132	319	158	57	29	282	287	312

TABLE V.

INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1908.

Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.			Under 1 Week	1-2 Weeks	2-3 Weeks	3-4 Weeks	Total under 1 Month	1-2 Months	2-3 Months	3-4 Months	4-5 Months	5-6 Months	6-7 Months	7-8 Months	8-9 Months	9-10 Months	10-11 Months	11-12 Months	Total Deaths under 1 year
ALL CAUSES.	Certified	...	54	14	9	10	87	38	31	29	19	24	15	14	16	19	12	4	307
	Uncertified	...	4	...	1	...	5	...	1	3	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	12
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	2	2	2	2	2	...	1	...	2	1	1	1	1	15
Diarrhoea, all forms	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	1	4	3	7	4	1	4	2	1	4	1	33
Enteritis, Muco-enteritis, Gastro-enteritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	...	...	...	10
Gastritis, Gastro-intestinal Catarrh	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	2	2	...	...	...	1	...	6
Premature Birth	...	...	33	7	3	2	45	5	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	50
Congenital Defects	...	...	1	1	1	1	4	3	...	1	1	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	11
Injury at Birth	...	...	1	1	1	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus	...	...	11	...	2	2	15	5	3	6	1	2	2	...	1	2	1	1	39
Tuberculous Meningitis	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	2	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	1	...	7
Tuberculous Peritonitis : Tabes Mesenterica	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	1	1	...	2	...	1	3	...	...	10
Other Tuberculous Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	5
Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	3
Syphilis	...	...	...	1	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Rickets	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	2	...	2	2	...	...	...	8
Meningitis (<i>not Tuberculous</i>)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Convulsions	...	...	6	...	1	1	8	2	3	5	1	2	1	2	...	1	...	...	25
Bronchitis	...	...	2	2	1	...	5	9	7	8	4	2	1	4	3	6	4	1	54
Pneumonia	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	6	5	1	1	2	3	1	4	1	...	...	25
Suffocation, overlying	...	...	1	...	...	...	1	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Other Causes	...	...	3	...	...	...	3	1	1	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	6
			58	14	10	10	92	38	32	31	20	24	15	15	16	19	12	5	319

TABLE VI.

PARTICULARS AS TO ACTIONS TAKEN UNDER
FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACT, 1901.*No. of Workshops on Register at end of 1908:—*

Workshop Bakehouses...	...	...	...	56
Breeze Banks	...	...	...	15
Dressmaking and Tailoring Establishments			...	61
Miscellaneous Trades	...	...	...	74
Total				<u>206</u>

PARTICULARS OF DEFECTS FOUND.

Nuisances under Public Health Acts:—

Want of Cleanliness	...	...	...	9
Sanitary Accommodation—				
Unsuitable or Defective	...	...	...	7
Other Nuisances	...	...	...	1
Total				<u>17</u>

Ten references were made by H.M. Inspector as to matters remediable under the Public Health Acts, but not under the Factory Acts.

Sanitary Inspector's Report,

FOR THE YEAR 1908.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

INTRODUCTION.

I have the honour to submit my Tenth Annual Report as Sanitary Inspector for the County Borough of West Bromwich.

Cases of Infectious Disease having been less numerous than during the preceding year, more time has been devoted to general sanitary work, and as a result a considerable increase in the number of permanent sanitary improvements has occurred, and this notwithstanding the break in the work occasioned by a change in the staff. The change referred to was occasioned by the departure of Mr. Kingston to Rushden, and the appointment of Mr. W. E. Lyon as his successor.

The staff now consists of District Inspectors Cotterell and Lyon, the latter being responsible for the inspection of meat.

Both the Assistants have rendered good service.

GENERAL SANITARY WORK.

HOUSE-TO-HOUSE INSPECTIONS.

In accordance with the requirements of the Public Health Act, 1875, systematic house-to-house inspections have been undertaken, the neighbourhoods selected for special attention being that portion of Hill Top Ward between Castle Street and the Wednesbury boundary, and the block of property bounded by Wood Lane and Bull Lane in Town Hall Ward. In all 546 houses in 16 streets were examined in detail, and a large number of structural defects were brought to light, as well as nuisances for which occupiers were primarily responsible. In view of the amendment inserted in the recent Housing Bill, requiring the institution of a systematic sanitary survey and the compilation of a special register, the particulars obtained as a result of these house-to-house inspections are likely to prove of very great service.

MISCELLANEOUS INSPECTIONS.

Under this heading are included the investigation of premises in consequence of complaints received and the periodical inspections of common yards. Although in many cases these common yards are kept in a thoroughly satisfactory condition, in a certain proportion of instances the principle of divided responsibility fosters neglect, and but for the regular visitations of the District Inspectors filth would accumulate and insanitary conditions would abound.

In addition to the routine work, assistance was rendered to a Commissioner from the Board of Trade, who was making further investigations into the nature and rental of housing accommodation in the district.

The total number of miscellaneous inspections made during the year has been 6,264.

EXAMINATION AND TESTING OF DRAINS.

The smoke test has been applied to the drainage of 23 houses and two schools, this procedure taking place in several instances after fatal cases of Diphtheria. In only four instances was the test applied with negative results, and in several cases some very serious defects were discovered. In one case, where a severe case of blood-poisoning had occurred, it was found that a down pipe had been improperly connected with the drain, with the result that the sewer gas could pass freely into the interior of a bath room. Detailed reports were made by me in each instance, and the new drainage substituted was re-tested.

NOTICES SERVED.

One thousand two hundred and fifty-six preliminary notices to owners and occupiers, particulars of which are given in Table II., have been served during the year.

Subsequently the premises affected were re-visited, and where the notices served had not been complied with circular letters were addressed to the parties responsible, or formally reported by me for the purpose of service of statutory notice.

Of the 181 notices served in accordance with your instructions, 91 were given in pursuance of the Public Health Act,

1875, and the Acts amending the same, and 90 under the West Bromwich Corporation Act, 1900.

In a large number of cases I have had interviews with owners, agents, or builders, either on the premises or at the office, concerning the nature of our requirements, with the result that friction has been obviated, and it has not been necessary to take advantage of your permission to institute legal proceedings in any single instance.

SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS EFFECTED.

Details of the various sanitary improvements effected as a result of the work of the Department are given in Table III. The number of improvements, many of which involved permanent structural alterations, shows a considerable increase on the corresponding figures for the preceding year. In all, 3,277 nuisances were abated.

Filthy and Dilapidated Houses and Outbuildings.

The interiors of 312 houses have been cleansed and white-washed, whilst extensive repairs to the plastering, woodwork, and brickwork have been necessary in 175 cases. An attempt has been made to deal with the dampness which is so constant a feature of the older type of house by requiring the insertion of a damp proof course in some of the worst cases, and some progress has been made in the matter of the substitution of the cleanly earthenware sink, in lieu of the foul, dilapidated, and leaking brick sink. Repairs to defective roofs or spouting, which also materially contribute to the dampness referred to, have taken place in 151 cases, and 78 filthy and dilapidated outbuildings have been limewashed or repaired.

Surface Paving and Draining in Yards.

The paving of 58 yards has been relaid, extended, or repaired. Eleven premises previously unconnected with the sewer have been effectually drained, most of these premises being in the Dial Lane district. One hundred and ninety-six lengths of stoneware pipe drains and 479 gullies have been provided for 596 houses in lieu of surface gutters, whilst 201 inspection chambers have been built in connection with such drainage systems.

Disused Wells.

In connection with the drainage work referred to, several disused wells were discovered, most of which were in a highly unsafe condition. These were invariably filled in, and in all 19 wells were so dealt with. Two exceedingly narrow escapes, consequent on the collapse of the coverings of hitherto unsuspected wells, were reported to me, but those known to the Department are kept under observation.

Privy and Water-closet Accommodation.

Far more satisfactory progress has been made during the past year in the work of converting privies into water-closets, some 458 privies having been abolished and 463 water-closets substituted, the number of houses concerned being 643.

In 16 instances only were existing privies and middens repaired, owners apparently recognising the utter futility of this procedure. Our work, too, has been greatly facilitated by the increasing support of occupiers in the measures we have taken to provide them with suitable sanitary accommodation. At the same time, there are a large number of privies in the town which are in a foul, wet, or dilapidated state, and complaints are exceedingly rife respecting offensive emanations from the privies themselves, and also when the unsavoury process of removing the stored excreta and urine is being carried on, so that it is not unreasonable to expect that the process of conversion will be accelerated in the near future.

Ninety-three official representations were made in pursuance of Section 66 of the West Bromwich Corporation Act, 1900, and in 46 cases orders were given by the Council for the execution of work in default. In 11 of these cases only was the work carried out by the Corporation, and in the majority of these instances with the concurrence or at the request of the owners concerned.

The number of choked water-closets reported on manifests a very gratifying diminution, and this in spite of the steady increase in the number of closets fixed.

OCCUPIERS' NOTICES.

The complaint made in some districts that insufficient attention is directed to the shortcomings of occupiers does not

hold good in West Bromwich, for out of the 1,256 notices served, 352 were addressed to occupiers, in addition to the verbal requests made by the District Inspectors in the course of their periodical visitations.

The number of cases of overcrowding dealt with manifests a slight reduction, but owing to the depressed state of trade considerable allowances have been made in cases where the sexes were properly separated.

The evils attendant on the use of sanitary conveniences in common by several occupiers have been minimised as much as possible by frequent visits and services of notices, but a few chronic cases still occasion much trouble and it may be necessary to again institute proceedings to bring about the desired improvement.

HOUSES UNFIT FOR HUMAN HABITATION.

Three properties, comprising 45 houses, were certified by the Medical Officer of Health as unfit for human habitation, and the necessary notices were served upon the owners. In one case repairs of an extensive character have been undertaken, and in the remaining two cases certain works have been commenced, pending the completion of which proceedings have been held over.

INSPECTION OF SLAUGHTER HOUSES AND FOOD SUPPLY.

This branch of the work has received constant attention at the hands of Mr. Kingston and his successor, Mr. Lyon.

One thousand eight hundred and eight visits have been made to slaughter-houses, in addition to 1,344 visits to butchers' shops. Two thousand eight hundred and forty-nine live animals, 2,322 sides and 1,121 quarters of beef, and the carcasses of 4,589 sheep, lambs, calves, or pigs have been carefully examined. Thirty-seven carcasses of beef were found to be more or less affected with tuberculosis; two carcasses were wholly destroyed; the forequarters and the internal organs of a third case were destroyed; while in the remaining cases, the disease being localised in character, the affected parts only were dealt with. The carcasses of two pigs were also found to be

affected with generalised tuberculosis, and these were also destroyed; as were also the carcasses of two sheep which had been suffocated and had bled badly.

The approximate quantity of meat destroyed is as follows:—

Beef, diseased or unsound...	...	1,724 lbs.
Pork ,, ,, ...	...	490 ,,
Mutton ,, ,, ...	...	203 ,,
		<hr/>
		2,417 lbs.

or 1 ton 1 cwt. 65 lbs.

It should be stated that in almost every instance the meat in question was surrendered by the respective owners, but magistrates' orders for condemnation were obtained in 18 cases. No proceedings were instituted during the year, but owing to the seizure of 12 lbs. of liver affected with tuberculosis in a small grocer's shop, the Town Clerk was instructed to caution the vendor.

Other articles of food, including fish, poultry, rabbits, and fruit, have from time to time been dealt with, and shops at which these articles of food are sold are also kept under supervision. Kitchens attached to restaurants are periodically inspected.

No new slaughter-house license has been granted during the year, and there are now 36 slaughter-houses on the register, of which 14 are subject to annual licenses.

INSPECTION OF BAKEHOUSES.

There are 56 workshop bakehouses on the register, this being a slight diminution as compared with the previous register, the reduction being due to the conversion of certain workshop bakehouses into factory bakehouses, which come under the supervision of the Government Inspector, and partly to the discontinuance of some of the less desirable types of domestic bakehouse, this cessation being due in a measure to the greater degree of supervision to which they have been subject within the last two or three years.

Circular letters requesting limewashing are addressed to the occupiers every six months, and these, as a rule, secure the desired effect.

INSPECTION OF COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS.

There are now 26 cowsheds and 94 milkshops or dairies on the register, one new cowshed and 14 milkshops having been registered during the year.

The premises have been regularly inspected by me throughout the year, and the attention of the respective occupiers directed to all breaches of the regulations.

I regret that very little improvement has taken place in the matter of the storage of manure. The practice of allowing manure to accumulate in a large open midden-stead situate in the yard in the vicinity of the cowshed, materially accentuates the "plague of flies," and this in itself conduces to milk contamination, whilst the recent report of the Royal Commission on Tuberculosis, as to the infectivity of manure from tuberculous cows, makes the matter still more serious. There is no doubt that in the near future the erection of special manure pits, not immediately adjoining the cowshed, of limited capacity, and which can be properly disinfected, will be insisted on. As it is, all remonstrances as to undue accumulations of manure are met by the plea that the exigencies of agricultural operations preclude more frequent removals.

The conditions, too, under which milk is retailed from many of the shops in the town are far from satisfactory. I have been able to induce a large number of the shopkeepers to keep muslin over the vessels in which milk is stored for sale, and although this prevents the larger dust particles, etc., from finding their way into the milk, yet the association in a stuffy shop of milk, various dust-producing articles, vinegar, etc., is open to considerable objection. The substitution of a system of annual licenses in lieu of the present method of registration would be of considerable benefit.

In one case where milk was found to be sold from a living room on unregistered premises, proceedings were authorised, but the sale of milk being forthwith discontinued, no action was taken.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES AND HOUSES LET IN LODGINGS.

The three registered common lodging houses have been regularly visited by me. These establishments now being licensed annually, it is possible to bring more stringent influences to bear upon the keepers. In one instance, where it appeared that special intervention was necessary, I made a detailed investigation of the cooking utensils and domestic fittings, and as a result a considerable number of improvements were effected.

The Bye-laws as to Houses Let in Lodgings are now in force in the district, and notice was given to the occupier of the tenement house in Holloway Bank to register his establishment, but in the end he decided to relinquish the practice of utilising the premises for the purpose in question.

INSPECTION OF CANAL BOATS.

During the year I have inspected 156 canal boats, representing a floating population of 230 men, 109 women, and 123 children. For the most part the regulations were adhered to, and the general conditions with respect to cleanliness must be regarded as satisfactory. Twenty infringements were reported, including:—Non-production of certificate, 7 cases; boat not properly marked, 2 cases; overcrowding, 1 case; inadequate separation of sexes, 1 case; want of painting, 4 cases; water receptacle not provided, 2 cases; and dilapidated boats, 5 cases.

Fourteen notices were served with respect to the above infringements. At the close of the year most of the matters complained of had been remedied.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Six hundred and thirteen cases of Infectious Disease have been investigated and reported on, and where removal to Hospital has not taken place, subsequent visits have been paid to ascertain if patients were properly isolated. Particular attention was directed to the sanitary fittings in all cases of Diphtheria, and in certain instances, as previously stated, the smoke test was applied to the drainage.

Six hundred and eighty-nine rooms were fumigated after removal, death, or convalescence, this figure including disinfection after fatal cases of Phthisis.

REMOVAL OF NIGHTSOIL AND REFUSE.

The number of middens and ashpits emptied during the year has been 6,235, an increase of 405 on the figure for the preceding year, and this notwithstanding the reduction in the number of middens. The total cost has been £2,625 5s. 10d., as compared with £3,005 in 1907, but inasmuch as two of the contractors have deposited instalments of their contract amounting to £107 19s., in default of finding sureties, the actual saving amounts to £271 15s. 2d.

A very considerable proportion of the middens and ashpits so emptied have been inspected by the staff, and generally speaking the receptacles appear to have been properly cleansed and disinfected.

The number of dustbins continues to increase, there now being about 6,000 bins emptied weekly. More than half these are emptied by the contractors under the provisions of their contracts, the remainder being emptied by men in your employ. The cost of the dustbin work, including the rent of the Cemetery Lane dépôt, has been £464 11s. 7d., as compared with £444 15s. 8d. last year.

The total amount expended on refuse removal has therefore been £3,089 17s. 5d., as compared with £3,491 10s. 1d. in 1907, but as, owing to the retention of certain instalments, the actual amount payable is £3,197 16s. 5d., the real saving is £251 19s. 3d.

As showing, however, the marked reduction which has been brought about in the cost of refuse removal, I might mention that in 1904 the cost of removal was over £3,720, so that there has been a saving of £520, and this notwithstanding the fact that an additional 2,400 dustbins have been added to our list.

The various tips used by our own men and the contractors have been regularly visited, but numerous complaints have been received respecting alleged nuisance from loose paper, etc.

The early provision of a destructor to deal with the dry refuse and the diminution in the quantity of privy refuse to be dealt with, should, however, materially diminish the number of such complaints. Pending the erection of a destructor, a man is being employed to bury the fish refuse deposited in Cemetery Lane.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

H. H. SPEARS, Fellow Sanitary Inspectors' Assoc.,

Chief Sanitary Inspector.

January, 1909.

TABLE I.

House-to-house inspections	...	...	...	546
Miscellaneous inspections, including inspections of common yards and houses concerning which com- plaints have been received	...	...	...	6264
Re-inspections	...	...	...	3832
Visits to slaughter-houses	...	...	...	1839
„ „ dairies, cowsheds, and milkshops...	...	...	...	237
„ „ shops, butchers	...	...	...	1344
„ „ „ fish, game and poultry	...	...	...	305
„ „ bakehouses, etc.	...	...	...	110
„ „ common lodging houses...	...	...	...	151
„ „ fat melting works, etc....	...	...	...	14
Number of canal boats inspected	...	...	...	156
Cases of infectious disease visited and reported on...				613
Other visits in connection with cases of infectious disease	...	...	...	217
Number of privies, etc. inspected and reported for emptying by staff	...	...	...	1096
Number of privies, etc., re-inspected after emptying				4070
Sundry visits	...	...	...	381
				<hr/>
Total number of inspections and visits	...	...	...	21,175
				<hr/>
Number of preliminary notices served	...	...	...	1256
„ „ statutory notices served	...	...	...	181
„ „ letters written to owners <i>re</i> nuisances	...	...	...	222
Notices served under Canal Boats Acts	...	...	...	14
Reports sent to Surveyor <i>re</i> dangerous buildings, etc.				64
Reports sent to Water Company <i>re</i> wastes of water...				161
Number of rooms disinfected	...	...	...	689
Number of reports sent to schools <i>re</i> infectious diseases	...	...	...	438
Number of drains tested	...	...	...	25

TABLE II.

PRELIMINARY NOTICES SERVED AND NUMBER OF
HOUSES IN CONNECTION WITH NOTICES.

			Notices. served.	Houses in connection with Notices.
Filthy and dilapidated houses ...	...	...	189	431
Filthy and dilapidated outhouses ...	...	...	61	165
Defective paving and surface channels ...	...	...	11	33
Defective eaves and downspouting ...	...	...	20	39
Insufficient drainage ...	...	...	11	31
Foul, untrapped drainage ...	...	...	3	4
Choked drainage and W.C.'s ...	...	...	48	140
Insufficient ashpit accommodation ...	...	...	152	378
Foul, wet and open middens ...	...	...	248	585
Defective W.C. connections ...	...	...	133	333
Filthy state of sanitary conveniences ...	...	...	277	277
Overcrowded rooms ...	...	...	31	31
Animals improperly kept ...	...	...	24	24
Offensive accumulations ...	...	...	7	17
Water in cellars ...	...	...	10	19
Insufficient water supply ...	...	...	4	25
Filthy bakehouses ...	...	...	8	8
Filthy workshops ...	...	...	1	1
Dairies and cowsheds not in accordance with regulations ...	...	...	4	4
Dangerous wells and cisterns ...	...	...	8	29
Miscellaneous ...	...	...	6	9
			<hr/>	<hr/>
	Totals ...	...	1256	2583

TABLE III.

SANITARY IMPROVEMENTS CARRIED OUT IN
DISTRICT IN PURSUANCE OF INSPECTIONS
MADE AND NOTICES SERVED.

Interior of Houses—

Filthy houses cleansed and whitewashed	...	312
Houses in which repairs to plastering, brickwork or woodwork have been carried out	... ..	175
Flooded cellars drained or filled in	... ..	13
Houses without sufficient means of ventilation, window openings, and means of ventilation provided	... ..	1

Exterior of Houses—

Defective roofs made watertight	... ..	85
Houses without eaves, spouting, or with choked or defective spouting—new spouting provided or existing spouting cleansed and repaired	... ..	86
Damp external walls. Brickwork repaired or covered with impervious coating	... ..	3
Dangerous chimneys repaired...	... ..	8

Yards and Outbuildings—

Surface paving in yards provided, renewed, or repaired	... ..	58
Dangerous wells or cisterns filled in or suitable coverings provided...	... ..	19
New earthenware sinks provided in lieu of old brick sinks	... ..	16
Filthy and dilapidated outbuildings cleansed and repaired	... ..	78

Drainage—

Absence of or insufficient drainage. Premises drained and connected to sewer or cesspool	...	11
Surface channels abolished and stoneware pipe drains provided	... ..	196
Defective drainage relaid or repaired	... ..	4
Number of manhole inspection chambers provided to drainage systems	... ..	201
Additional gullies fixed	... ..	479

Choked drains opened and cleansed	...	...	52
Foul untrapped drains. Stoneware gully traps fixed	...	...	1
<i>Privies, Water-closets, and Ashpits—</i>			
Privies abolished	...	...	458
Middens abolished	...	...	356
Dry ashpits abolished and dustbins substituted...			1
Water-closets with flush cisterns substituted for privies	...	...	463
Fresh water-closets substituted for waste water-closets	...	...	4
Dilapidated privies and ashpits repaired			7
Percolations of faecal matter from privies, etc., privies cemented	...	...	9
Galvanised dustbins provided in lieu of middens...			307
Additional ashbins provided	...	...	228
Middens abolished and converted into dry ashpits			2
Choked water-closets opened and cleansed	...		139
Defective W.C. connections made good...	...		106
Insufficient supply of water to W.C.'s. Flush improved	...	...	40
Defective tippers renewed and inspection chambers provided to waste water-closets	...	...	8
<i>Keeping of Animals and Offensive Accumulations—</i>			
Nuisances from the keeping of swine abated	...		6
Fowls or other poultry kept in dwelling houses or so as to be a nuisance—removed from premises			22
Offensive accumulations removed from premises...			5
<i>Overcrowding—</i>			
Houses overcrowded—numbers reduced...	...		31
<i>Miscellaneous—</i>			
Manure pits provided or repaired	...	...	10
Miscellaneous nuisances abated	...	...	21
Filthy approaches to privies cleansed by occupiers			1
<i>Water Supply—</i>			
Houses without a proper supply of drinking water—water laid on	...	...	2

Factory and Workshops Act—

Filthy and dilapidated bakehouses cleansed or		
repaired	8	
Closet accommodation provided	4	

Dairies and Cowsheds—

Dairies cleansed and limewashed	4	
--	---	--

Slaughter-houses—

Galvanised iron tins provided for reception of		
offal	4	

Infectious Diseases—

Walls cleansed and stripped	2	
------------------------------------	---	--

Housing of Working Classes Act—

Houses unfit for human habitation closed	2	
---	---	--

Total ...	4048	
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Foods and Drugs Inspector's Report

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31ST, 1908.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee.

GENTLEMEN,

Herewith I beg to submit a Report of the work carried out under the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts during the year ending December 31st, 1908.

I have obtained 142 samples under the provisions of the above Acts, consisting of the following:—New Milk, 58; Skim Milk, 1; Butter, 70; Margarine, 5; Tea, 1; Ground Ginger, 2; White Pepper, 5.

These were all submitted to and were analysed by the Public Analyst, who certified 131 samples (92.25 per cent.) as “genuine,” 7 samples (4.93 per cent.) as “genuine but of low quality,” and 4 samples (2.82 per cent.) as “adulterated.”

All the inferior samples were milk.

The adulterated samples consisted of 2 Milks and 2 Butters. One of the former contained 2 per cent. of added water, and the vendor was cautioned, no proceedings being taken. In the second case the sample (taken from a wholesaler in the course of delivery) was found to be deficient of its natural fat to the extent of 15 per cent.

Proceedings were taken in this case, and the vendor was fined £3 and £2 15s. costs.

The two adulterated Butter samples were obtained from a vendor who was selling same from door to door.

This system of trading, I am pleased to state, is not a general one in your district, and when adulterated samples are sold in this manner, it at once becomes a difficult matter to trace the vendor.

By invoking the aid of the Chief Sanitary Inspector (Mr. H. H. Spears) I was enabled to procure a sample from and to obtain a good description of the vendor.

The sample, upon analysis, was proved to contain only 2 per cent. of butter, and considering the fact that the vendor also abstracted from the original weight of the parcels, he was selling at the rate of 1s. 7d. per lb.

I applied for a warrant for the arrest of the vendor for obtaining money by false pretences, and he was arrested in the Dudley area, whilst disposing of a substance for butter, which was found upon analysis to also contain only 2 per cent. of butter.

At the hearing it was proved that the defendant came from Devonshire and had several previous convictions against him in various parts of the country under the Foods and Drugs Acts.

He was sentenced to three months hard labour.

In the appended table I give particulars of the nature, substance, and quality of the articles examined.

SUMMARY.

Nature of Food or Drug.	No. of Samples Analysed	Genuine	Genuine, but of Low Quality	Adulterated	Cautioned	Prosecuted	Convicted	Amount of Penalty			Amount of Costs			Remarks.
								£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
New Milk ...	58	49	7	2	1	1	1	3	0	0	2	15	0	2% added water, 15 deficient of butter fat.
Skim Milk ...	1	1												
Butter ...	70	68	...	2	...	1	1	...			...			3 months' hard labour
Margarine ...	5	5												
Tea ...	1	1												
GroundGinger	2	2												
White Pepper	5	5												
	142	131	7	4	1	2	2	3	0	0	2	15	0	

Year.		No. of Samples Analysed.		Genuine.		Genuine, but Low Quality.		Adulterated.
1907	...	140	...	121	...	13	...	6
1906	...	140	...	125	...	11	...	4
1905	...	139	...	125	...	11	...	3
1904	...	141	...	125	...	12	...	4
1903	...	141	...	120	...	11	...	10
1902	...	143	...	118	...	13	...	12
1901	...	140	...	117	...	15	...	8
1900	...	151	...	134	...	9	...	8

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

GEO. WM. DAVIS.

Analyst's Report.

*To the Chairman and Members of the Sanitary Committee,
County Borough of West Bromwich.*

GENTLEMEN,

Herewith I beg to submit my Annual Report on the work carried out under the Foods and Drugs Acts during the year 1908.

The total number of articles submitted to me for analysis was 142, or two more than in the year 1907. Nineteen of these samples were purchased or obtained "unofficially," in accordance with the suggestion made some two years ago by the Local Government Board, who are of opinion that this method of procedure affords greater possibilities for the detection of fraud. This method of sampling supplied two of the adulterated foods, to which reference will be made at a later stage of the report.

In the following table will be found a summary, giving the number and kind of articles examined during the year. The samples, as in previous reports, are divided into three classes, according to their quality, viz.:—

- (1) Genuine and of good quality.
- (2) Genuine, complying with the necessarily low official limits, but of poor quality.
- (3) Adulterated.

Description of Article.	Total Number of Samples.	"Officially" Purchased Samples.	"Unofficially" Purchased Samples.	Genuine Samples.	Genuine Samples, of Poor Quality.		Adulterated Samples.		Vendors Prosecuted.
					Official	Un-official	Official	Un-official	
Milk... ..	58	57	1	49	6	1	2	...	1
Skim Milk ...	1	1	...	1					
Butter ...	70	53	17	68	...	...	...	2	1
Margarine ...	5	5	...	5					
Pepper ...	5	5	...	5					
Ginger ...	2	2	...	2					
Tea ...	1	...	1	1					
	142	123	19	131	6	1	2	2	2

The number of articles found to be adulterated was 4, or a percentage of 2.8, which is slightly more favourable than last year (4.3 per cent.), and practically identical with the percentage for 1906 (2.75 per cent.)

The next table contains a list of the adulterated articles, with information as to what action was taken against the vendors, and also states the results of any proceedings.

Description of Article.	Nature and extent of Adulteration.	Remarks.
Milk— (Sample 1176)	Deficient of 15 per cent. of its natural butter fat.	Vendor fined £3. Costs, £2 5s. 6d. False warranty, costs 9s. 6d.
Milk— (Sample 1186)	Added water : 2 per cent.	No action.
Butter— (Sample 1247)	Margarine 98 per cent. Butter 2 per cent.	Vendor sentenced to three months' imprisonment.
Butter— (Sample 1248)	Margarine 98 per cent. Butter 2 per cent.	Same vendor as butter No. 1247.

Of the fifty-seven milks analysed, forty-nine were of good quality; seven, though complying with the official limits, were inferior; and two only were adulterated, one to a very slight extent. Systematic search was made for the presence of preservatives in the various samples, and as in previous years, I am again able to report their entire absence.

Two samples sold as “ fresh country butter ” were found to contain 98 per cent. of foreign fat. As the samples were obtained “ unofficially,” it was impossible to proceed under the Foods and Drugs Acts, but the vendor, a hawker, describing himself as a farmer, was prosecuted for obtaining money by false pretences, and sentenced by the Bench to three months' imprisonment.

All the other samples mentioned in the first table were of a satisfactory character, and from the results recorded in this report, there would appear to have been very little adulteration of the more important foods in your Borough during the past year.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Yours obediently,

HARRY SILVESTER, B.Sc., F.I.C.
(Public Analyst.)

